

zoning district did not reflect the actual building heights prevailing in the neighborhoods in which that district was mapped, leading to the construction of 20-story buildings in neighborhoods of 5-story buildings. The open space requirements, which effectively restrict construction to a small percentage of the lot, often mean that developers must assemble larger parcels if they are to achieve realistic development footprints. Developers are thus encouraged to accumulate, clear, and combine several adjacent lots rather than build on a single lot and preserve the neighboring structures.

Clearly, historic district designation alone is not sufficient; reforms are also needed: to adopt zoning regulations that ensure that new development is in a form sympathetic to the existing built form of historically or architecturally significant areas, and to adopt land use review procedures that guard against harm to neighborhood character or architectural resources.

Specifically, within the districts themselves, reforms are needed (1) to achieve the greatest possible consistency between the different aspects of the city's land use regulations (i.e., zoning and historic district designations); (2) to allow appropriate development as of right, avoiding the time and expense that the special permit process entails; (3) to force all development proposals to fit into a sympathetic zoning envelope, thus using zoning regulations to mold the designs submitted to the LPC for review; and (4) to provide property owners and their architects with the clearest and most consistent possible guidance.

The areas outside of the districts have not been deemed to have the same historical or architectural significance. Yet, the blocks surrounding historic districts often contain similar building types and are often equally significant to neighborhood identity, and transition zones are often needed to preserve the character of the districts themselves and to prevent glaringly inappropriate juxtapositions. State enabling legislation recognizes these situations and empowers municipalities to apply historic district regulations to development beyond the district boundaries. Unfortunately, New York City's landmarks law provides no such mandate.

In the areas adjacent to historic districts, reforms are needed (1) to establish a mechanism for determining where continuation of a historic district's built form is appropriate, and where buffer or transition zones are needed; (2) where deemed appropriate, to adopt zoning that mandates a built form roughly similar to, or at least sympathetic to, that within the historic district; (3) to channel development in such a way, where possible, that excessive bulk is directed away from the edges of low density historic districts; and (4) to provide the LPC with an appropriate voice regarding zoning and development proposals adjacent to historic districts.

The challenge for the 1990s—as the city enters the second quarter century of landmarks preservation—is to manage historic resources within the context of an ever-changing city; to permit but reasonably regulate change. The purpose of zoning is not to discourage development, but to channel it into proper forms or proper locations. The goal is to ensure that when new construction inevitably occurs, either within or near historic district boundaries, it will be appropriate to its surroundings. Development should occur within and near historic dis-

tricts, but it can and should be in a form that will not adversely affect those districts, which serve such vital functions: enhancing tourism, improving the quality of life, and generally enriching the city.

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